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A NEW RACE OF WOOD RAT (*NEOTOMA*)
FROM THE GULF SIDE
OF CENTRAL BAJA CALIFORNIA, MEXICO

BY

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Study of the chain of races of *Neotoma lepida*, from southern California down through the peninsula of Baja California, reveals the presence of an undescribed race on the coastal Gulf slope of the central section of this long peninsula. This race may be known as

***Neotoma lepida aridicola* subsp. nov.**
SAN FRANCISQUITO WHITE-FOOTED WOOD RAT.

TYPE.—From El Barril (near 28° 20' N), Gulf of California, Baja California, Mexico; No. 15595, collection of the San Diego Society of Natural History; adult male; collected by Laurence M. Huey, March 27, 1947.

CHARACTERS.—*Neotoma lepida aridicola* is similar in body size to *Neotoma lepida felipensis*, the race living along the Gulf coast to the north in the vicinity of San Felipe, but its buffy color appears richer and brighter when the two forms are compared in series. Cranially, *N. l. aridicola* differs from *N. l. felipensis* in several characters. The rostrum is narrower and more slender and the braincase is more rounded when viewed dorsally. Posteriorly, the braincase is narrower and more vaulted. The ventral surface of the skull of *N. l. aridicola* shows several outstanding differences when compared with *N. l. felipensis*. The molars are smaller and the series from m^1 to m^3 tapers more acutely. The pterygoids are more nearly parallel than those of *N. l. felipensis*, and the auditory bullae are decidedly smaller and rounder.

Compared with *Neotoma lepida molagrandis*, the race that occupies the opposite side of the peninsula on the Pacific Ocean slope, *N. l. aridicola* is immediately set apart by its very light-colored pelage and its smaller size. In cranial characters *N. l. aridicola* differs as much from *N. l. molagrandis* as it does from *N. l. felipensis*; the bullae are smaller and more rounded, and the molariform teeth are smaller.

The light-colored desert race *N. l. aridicola* differs conspicuously in color from the dark-pelaged *Neotoma lepida ravidia*, the race found in the black lava mountainous district to the south. Cranial differences are not so pronounced as between the two former races, though the molariform teeth and auditory bullae differ slightly.

MEASUREMENTS OF TYPE.—Total length, 325; tail, 145; hindfoot, 31; ear, 28. *Skull*: Greatest length, 41.2; zygomatic breadth, 21.1; interorbital breadth, 5.3; greatest length of nasals, 16.2; length of palatal bridge, 7.4; alveolar length of upper molar series, 7.3.

RANGE.—So far as known, the desert slopes on the Gulf side of the peninsula in the region from San Francisquito Bay to El Barril. Further exploration of the arid Gulf slopes will probably show that this race lives considerably farther both to the north and to the south.

REMARKS.—Studies of the various species of small land mammals living on the peninsula of Baja California reveal links in the racial chains yet to be described. These are to be found in the remote regions which are difficult of access in this interesting land. As these areas are explored and carefully trapped, novelties will be collected, such as the wood rat described herein.

Following is a list, with type localities, of the races of the wood rats of the *Neotoma lepida* group now known to occur on the peninsula, exclusive of its islands.

Race	Type locality
<i>Neotoma lepida intermedia</i>	Dulzura, San Diego Co., California.
<i>Neotoma lepida gilva</i>	Banning, Riverside Co., California.
<i>Neotoma lepida felipensis</i>	San Felipe, Baja California, Mexico.
<i>Neotoma lepida egressa</i>	1 mi. e. of El Rosario, Baja California, Mexico.
<i>Neotoma lepida molagrandis</i>	Santo Domingo Landing (3 mi. inland from beach; near 28° 15' N), Baja California, Mexico.
<i>Neotoma lepida aridicola</i>	El Barril (near 28° 20' N), Gulf of California, Baja California, Mexico.
<i>Neotoma lepida ravida</i>	Comondú, Baja California, Mexico, alt. 700'
<i>Neotoma lepida pretiosa</i>	Matancita (= Soledad), 50 mi. n. of Magdalena Bay, Baja California, Mexico.
<i>Neotoma lepida notia</i>	La Laguna, Sierra de la Victoria, southern Baja California, Mexico.
<i>Neotoma lepida arenacea</i>	San José del Cabo, Baja California, Mexico.

SPECIMENS EXAMINED.—*Neotoma lepida felipensis*. Baja California, Mexico: San Felipe (type locality), 15.

Neotoma lepida egressa. Baja California, Mexico: 7 mi. e. of San Quintín, 3; 10 mi. e. of San Quintín, 5; Santa Maria near San Quintín, 7; San Quintín, 4; Aguaita, 1; 15 mi. nw. of San Fernando, 5; Santa Catarina Landing, 1.

Neotoma lepida ravida. Baja California, Mexico: south end of Conception Bay, 7; Comondú (type locality), 5.

Neotoma lepida aridicola. Baja California, Mexico: El Barril (near 28° 20' N), Gulf of California (type locality), 11; 7 mi. w. of San Francisquito Bay, 2.

Neotoma lepida molagrandis. Baja California, Mexico: Santo Domingo Landing (3 mi. inland from beach; near 28° 15' N; type locality), 2; Punta Prieta, 2; Mesquital, 2; Calmallí, 1; Santa Gertrudis, 1; 12 mi. e. of El Arco, 1; San Ignacio, 3.